

JUSTIFICATION OF PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE

Activity: Planning Assistance to States

Program Component	1999 Estimate	Uncontr/ Related Changes	Program Changes (+/-)	2000 Budget Request	Change From 1999 (+/-)
Open Space Planning Grants	0	0	+50,000	50,000	+50,000
Total Requirements \$(000)	0	0	+50,000	50,000	+50,000

AUTHORIZATION

Funds to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (16 U.S.C. 4601).

OVERVIEW

The **Open Space Planning Grants** activity provides competitive planning grants to State and Tribal governments to assist in developing regional planning strategies that will aid in open space preservation.

APPLICABLE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MISSION GOALS

IIIb Through partnerships with State and local agencies and nonprofit organizations, a nationwide system of parks, open space, rivers, and trails provides educational, recreational, and conservation benefits for the American people.

FY 2000 BUDGET REQUEST

	2000 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
▪ Planning Assistance to States \$(000)	50,000	+50,000

▪ **Open Space Planning Grants (+\$50,000,000; +15 FTE):** The NPS is requesting \$50 million and 15 full-time equivalents in FY 2000 for a new competitive grant program to support the development of State, regional, and Tribal plans for open space preservation, smart growth strategies, and efforts to mitigate the effects of urban sprawl in support of the President's *Lands Legacy Initiative*. This initiative is part of a \$1.0 billion effort to preserve America's land resources and is central to the President's strategy of "Forging a Conservation Vision for the 21st Century." This program would provide competitive grants to States and Tribes to support planning efforts that utilize state-of-the-art geographical tools and integrated approaches to conserve open space, recreational opportunities, farmland, wildlife habitat, and cultural and natural assets, and to link these objectives to planned transportation, infrastructure, economic development, and population growth. Grant award criteria would be developed in consultation with State and Tribal officials, and the public, and would emphasize the utility of integrated landscape-level planning approaches with participation from local, regional, and State governments. The grants will require matching contributions from State and local sponsors.

Open space protection and land acquisition is gaining momentum at the regional and local levels as a means to protect farmland, maintain natural surroundings in communities, and combat sprawl. The objective of this grant program is to ensure that land and open space conservation efforts are made with the best available information and coordinated with economic development, transportation, and other plans. Of the amount requested, \$1.5 million will be reserved for program administration. Aside from normal grant administration expenditures, start-up costs will be incurred due to the need to develop program guidelines, project selection criteria, staffing, training and technical assistance.